



Here begynneth the lyfe of
Roberte the Deuyll.

Roberte the Deuyll.

A

METRICAL ROMANCE,

FROM AN

Ancient Illuminated Manuscript.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR I. HERBERT.

1798.

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THIS MS. of ROBERT THE DEVIL appears to have been transcribed, word for word, from an edition in quarto printed either by *Wynken de Worde* or *Pynson*, of which I have seen a fragment consisting of six leaves; these have been collated with the MS.

No mention is made of this edition in Mr. Herbet's *Typographical Antiquities*.* Nor have I ever seen a complete copy or heard of one: it is probable that the impression was destroyed in the fire of London. There are no cuts in the fragment. The Drawings in the MS. seem to be of the time of Elizabeth or James I.

The MS. was formerly in the possession of Mr. Radcille.

I. H.

* Though in p. 227 and 228 is given a transcript of the heads of the chapters, from an edition in the Public Library Cambridge, apparently in prose, coinciding exactly in matter with this.

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THE
LYFE
OF
Roberte the Deuyll.

LYSTEN lordinges that of marueyles
lyke to heare
Of actes that were done sometyme in dede
By oure elders that before vs were
How some in myscheiffe their lyfe dyd leade
And in this boke may ye se yf that ye will rede
Of one Robert the deuyll, borne in Normandye
That was as uengeable a man as myght treade
On goddes grounde for he delyted all in tyranye.

A A Duke

The Life of

A Duke sometyme in Normandye there was
 Full uertuous and deuoute in all hys lyuynge
 And in almosē dedes, he yede in the waye of grace
 Of knyghtlye maners, and manfull in iustynge
 A Lordlye parsone, also courtes in euery thyngē
 Hys dwellyngē was at Nauerne vpon sayne
 At Chrystmas to honoure that holy tyme
 Open houshalde he kepte, and to please God was
 [fayne.

A feaste he helde vpon a certayne daye
 Lordes come thyther of greate renowne
 And as they late at dyner a knyght gan saye
 Vnto the Duke, and on hys knees kneled downe
 My lorde he sayd ye be owner of many a towne
 Yet haue ye no lady, nor none heyre
 After your dayes to reioyce youre grounde
 Therfore gett youe a princes that ys yonge and fayre.

Wyuelonge said the duke haue I taryed
 And lyued sole withoute any mate
 I se well yt ys youre wyll that I shoulde be maryed
 But yet woulde I haue one to myne estatē
 Accordyngē, for and I shoulde take
 A Lady of nobler bloude than I am
 Or else of lower degre, soone shoulde I forsake
 Myne owne worship, and lyue lyke no man.

Yf.

Roberte the Deuyll.

3

Yf I shoulde nowe wedde, and after repent
And lyue in sorowe and greate langoure
Than myght I saye that fortune had me sent
A chaunce mysfortunate, distaynyng the floure
Of noble fame that shoulde encrease myne honoure
Wherfore lordes all, accordinge to prudence—
A foresight sayeth Salomon ys worthe treasure
Yet be ye ruled by fortune a Lady of excellencē.

Than sayde to the Duke a Baron right bolde
My lorde I besike youre grace of audyence
The Duke bade hym than saye what he woulde
In Burgonye sayd the Baron ys a ladye of reuerence
Daughter to the Earle, yf yt please youre magnyfie
Her for to take, there wyl no man saye naye [cence
Than to hys wordes the Duke gave credence
And sayde I knowe well the Earles daughter that lady
[gaye

In processe that lady to the Duke was maryed
A feaste was made of greate solemnynche
And twelue yeares together they taryed
In wealth and greate prosperytē
Goddes lawe they kepte and lyued vertuouslye
Yet chylde together had they none
They prayed to god with heart deuoutlye
Yf yt pleased hym for to sende them one.

A 2

Euer

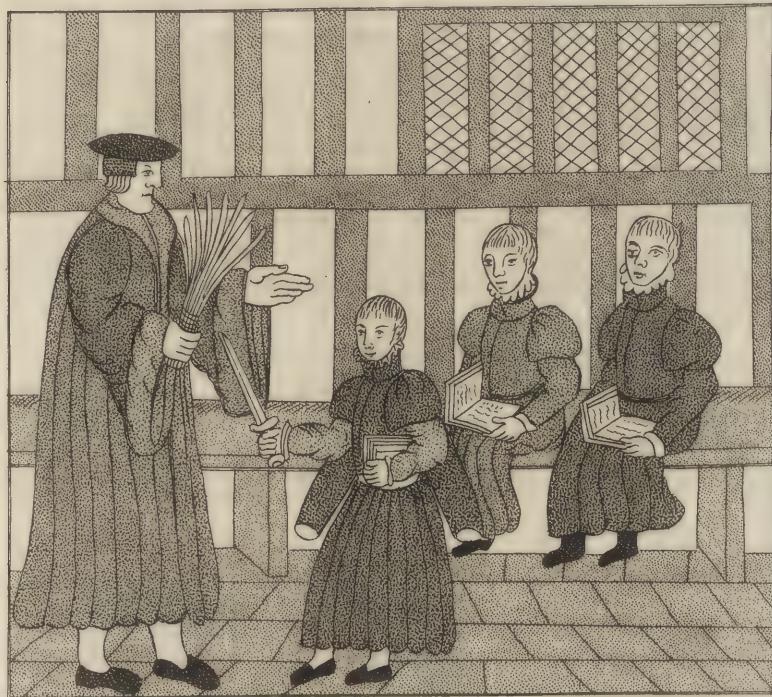
The Life of

Euer they prayed, but yt woulde not be
 In twelue yeare, chylde had they none
 Good dedes they dyd, and gae almoſe plentye
 Alacke ſaid thys Ladye ſhall I lyve alone
 Oſte ſhe syghed and made greate mone
 That no chylde on her body woulde ſpryngē
 The good Duke alſo ever dyd grone
 And ſayed good Jesu yet heare my cryēngē

Lordē ſende me a chylde the worlde to multyple
 The Duke ſayde, yf it be thy wyll
 My wyfe ſoroweth in her partye
 I feare that ſhe wyll her ſelfe ſpyll
 Nothinge to the lordē that ys vnpoffyble
 Nowe heare my prayer for loue of thy mother
 ſende me a chylde my petycion to fullſyll
 For to be myrry I defyre none other.

And on a tyme the Duke and Duches walked
 In a garden by them ſelfe alone
 Eche of them complayned and to other talked
 Howe they could haue no chylde, and made much
 Full greate, and ſaide joy haue we none [mone ;
 I curse them ſaide the Duke that made the maryage
 For I had leuer to have lyued ſtyll alone
 Chylde haue I none, to reioyce myne herytage.

And





Roberte the Deuyll.

5

And said yf I had be maryed to another ladye
I knowe that I shoulde have had chyldren ynowe
The Duches aunswered as for her partye
Yf I had chaunged, verylye I trowe [youe
That chyldern I shoulde haue had; none haue I by
Let vs thanke god of that he doth vs fende
For I beleue and do verelye trowe
That all oure forowe he may yt amende.

So on a morowe the Duke went on huntynge
Hys hearte was fullfylled all with thought
In hys mynde chydde, and agayne god grudgyng
He sighed sore inwardlye and ofte
If he myght haue dyed, nothyng he rought
And sayde god loueth not me, all in dyspayre
Many women haue chyldren: but myne nought
Alas I trowe I shall have none to be myne heyre

The fende tempted foore the Duke tho-
That he wyft not what to do nor saye
He left huntynge and homewarde he dyd go
And in to hys chaumber he toke the waye
So there the Duches at the same tyme laye
In as greate trouble as her husbande was
And to her lorde faide no chylde I beare maye
I am vnhappye, and therewith sayde alas.

He

He toke her in hys armes and her kyfte
 And of that Lady he had all his pleasure
 And so begate a chyld; and yt not wyfte
 The Duke to oure Lorde made hys prayer
 For to sende hym a chylde for to gladde hys chere
 The ladye saide the Deuyll now sende vs one
 For god wyl not oure petycion heare
 Therefore I trowe power hath he none

She sayde yf I be conceyued this houre nowe
 I geve yt to the deuyll both soule and bodye
 Lo thys lady was nere folyshe I trowe
 And fullfylled with great obstynacye
 Her owne soule there she dyd put in ieopardye
 For that houre she dyd conceyve with a man chylde
 That whan he was borne lyued myscheuouslye
 In thefte and murder lyke a tyraunte wylde

The tyme drewe so that nyne monethes was past
 Than her tyme drewe on verye nyne
 At the houre of byrth she laboured fast
 More than a moneth the boke doth specyfye
 She had many throwes, with many a pytteous crye
 Ladyes prayed for her, and gaue almes dede
 They trowed verelye that she shoulde dye
 With that our ladye wolde her helpe and sped.

And

Roberte the Deuyll.

7

And asone as Robert the deuyll was borne
The skyes waxed blacke that it was wonder
And sodenlye there began a full greate storne
Rayne lyghtenyng with horrible thonder
They feared that the house would ryue a fonder
Then blewe the wynde with greate power
That they wende the dome had he comen there
For downe wente wyndowes and euery doore.

Halfe the house the deuyll pulled downe
Yet at the last the wether waxed cleare
So for dreade thys lady laye in a fowne
That greate wetherynge she dyd fore feare ;
Her gentlewomen bade her be of good chere
They told her that the wather was gone and past
Then to the churche the chylde they dyd beare.
And chrystened yt Robert at the last.

He was as bygge the same daye
As some chylde of twelue monethes olde
When they came from Churche he cryed all the
That yt made many hym to beholde [ways
Men fadre the chylde loked very bolde
Hys teeth grewe fast when that he shoulde soucke
The noryshe nypples so harde byte he woulde
That yt went then to her verye hearte roote.

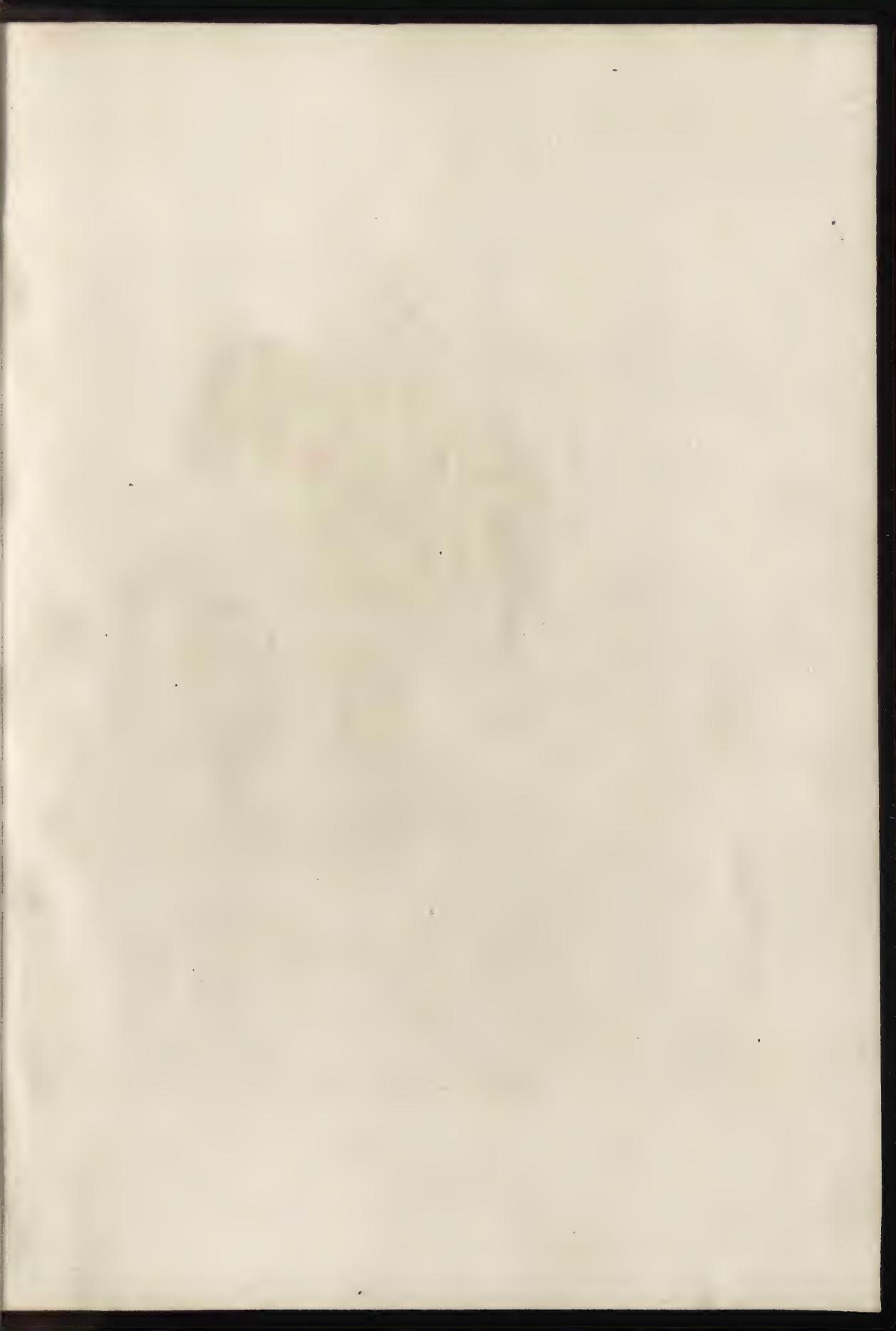
There

There durst no woman geue hym suck in faye
 For hys teeth grewe so peryllouslye
 That the noryshe nypbles be bote a waye
 But than they woulde no more byde the iopardye
 So with an horne he was fedde trewlye
 At the years ende he could bothe go and speake
 The elder he waxed, the more vnhappye
 Shrewdnes he woulde do bothe in house and streate

Hurte would he do to woman and man
 Vngracious was he daye and nyght
 Yf he amonge any chyldren came
 He woulde them hurte both scratche and byte
 Caste stones at theyr heade and fyght
 Breake their shynnes and put some eyes oute
 Lordes and ladyes of hym had greate delyght
 And wende yt had ben but wantonnes withoute
 [doute.

Mennes chyldren there he dyd muche harme
 Of them he hurte shrewdelye many a one
 Breake bothe legge headde and arme
 Therefore he was beloued of none
 Hys compayne chyldren forsoke everychone
 They dyd flee fro him as the deuyll fro holy water
 We wyll not haue hym amonge vs to come
 They sayd and he never do; we be gladder.

For





Roberte the Deuyll.

9

For and the chyldern had seen hym come
In to the streate there for to playe
They woulde take theyr legges, and away runne
To theyr fathers as faste as they maye
Roberte the Deuyll dothe come they would faye
For yonge chyldren gave him that name
The chyldren hydde them in corners every daye
And to runne from hym they woulde leaue theyr game.

And whan that he was aboute seuen yeare of aye
Hys father sette hym to scole in dede
With a dyscrete man and a sage
And prayed hys sonne that he would sped
For to learne both to wryte and reade
And to Roberte the deuyll hys father fayde
Sonne, yf thy lyfe in vertue thou leade
Than wyll I with the be right well a payed.

Robert the Deuyll wente to scole a lytell space
And euer he thought yt to longe ywys
He learned so that he was past all grace
Yt happened at the last he dyd amysse
Hys master fayde Syr youe muste amende thys
Or elles forsothe ye shalbe beate
He fayde yf thou smyte me I wyll make the wyshe
That thou thyne owne fleshe rather had eate.

B

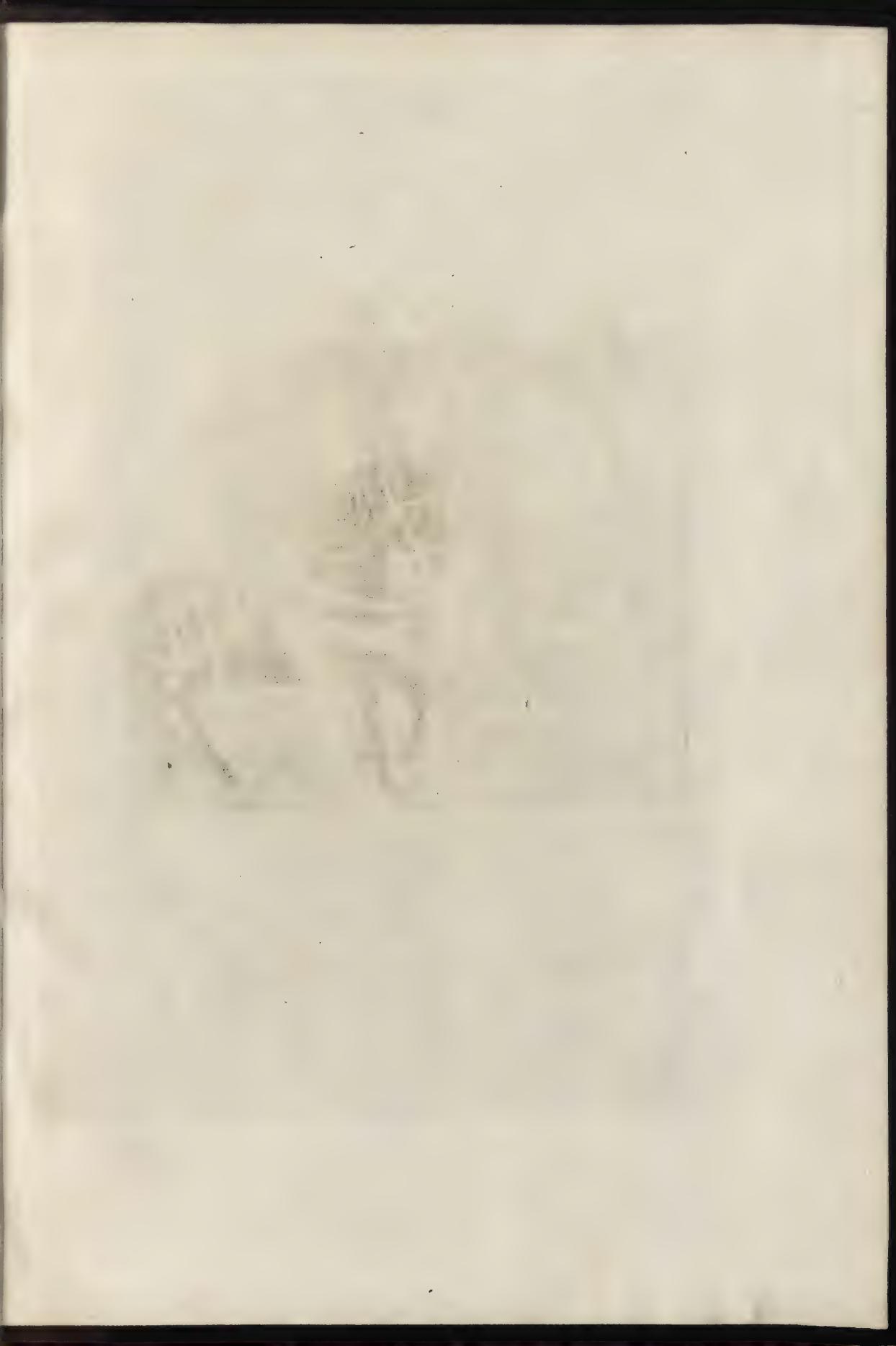
Naye

Naye sayde hys master ye be to bolde
 And toke a rodde for to chaste hym soone,
 So to beate hym he sayde that he woulde
 Roberte sawe what he purposed to done
 And sayde ye were better lette me a lone
 For with a dagger he thrust hym in to the bellye
 That the bloude ran downe in to hys shone
 So slew hys master, and let hym deade lye.

Whan Robert the Deuyll sawe hys master fall
 He sayde he woulde go to scole no more
 Hys boke he threwe agaynst the wall
 The deuyll have the whyt that he was forye therfore
 Alacke he made hys fathers hearte soore
 When that hys master had slayne
 The Duches cursed the houre that he was bore.
 She sayde of hys compayne no man ys fayne.

After that there woulde no pryst hym teache
 He folowed uice, he woule be ruled by none
 And mocke prystes whan they shoulde preache
 For and he into the church had gone
 He woulde skorne the clearkes euerychone
 And when they songe, come them behynde
 So threwe dust in theyr mowthes by one and one
 And some in theyr eyes to make them blynde.

YF





Roberte tde Deuyll.

11

Yf he sawe any men or women deuoutlye knele
For to serue God with theyr prayer, or stande
Pryuelye behynde them woulde he steale
And geue them a sowce with hys hande
To cause some to yell out theyr tonges longe
Or els he woulde make theyr heade go to grounde
Theyr neckes he hurte sore he was so stonge
And many olde folkes he caused to sounde.

Yt was vnpossible for a clarke to write
The dedes he dyd that weare full vengeable
Then gentlemen that weare sadde and dyscrete
Complayned to hys father withoute fable
The Duke sayde, to chaste hym I am not able
Than Robert was brought before hym
He sayde: Sonne, thy dedes ben reproueable
Thou shamest me and all thy hole kynne.

Thow doest all thyng that dyspleaseth god
Thy scolemaster thou flewest with a knyfe
Because that he woulde haue beate the with a rodde
To the prystes in churche thou doest muche greyfe
Full ofte I wyshe me oute of my lyfe
For thou of thy dedes arte so houge and peryllouse
That chyldren younge bothe mayde and wyfe
Whyche dothe the knowe geueth the theyr curse

B 2

All

All one with hym, in at the one eare and out at
 He was neuer the better daye nor nyght [the other
 Hys olde laye kept, he woulde do none other
 He was neuer glad but when he dyd fyght
 To swere and lye, theryn he had great delyght
 At last hys mother to her lorde spake
 And sayd yt were best to make hym a knyght
 Thys noble ordre let Robert the deuyll take.

For I trust then he wyll amende
 Whan he that greate othe doth heare
 Yt wyll make hym forye for that he dyd offend
 And the workes of god hereafter for to leare
 The Duke consented euen right there
 And asked Robert yf he would lyue vnder awe
 Of god, and the order of knight-hode beare
 He aunswere I sett not thereby a strawe.

At the last Robert was made a knyght
 Hys father bade him take hede of hys othe
 To destroye wronge and to maynteyne right
 And do trewe iustyce for leefe or for lothe
 For a knyght that in cheualrye goethe
 Euer agaynst vice he must fyght
 And supporte trewe maydens, and he so dothe
 He ys an inherytoure of heaven, goddes own knyght.

Robert





Roberte the Deuyll.

13

Robert aunswered, father at youre commandement
I wyll thys greate order vpon me take
But for to chaunge all myne entent
As for my manners I wyll not forsake
All men shall not ones me make
For to leaue my customes olde
I will contynewe and neuer wyll flake
Thoughe I therfore my lyfe lose shoulde.

The Duke caused a greate iustynge to be
Lordes came fro many a farre lande
And Ladyes also that runnyng to see
He that shoulde be mooste doughtye of hande
There was many a knight full stonge
That thought theyr clothes of full greate pryce
Yet a gayne Roberte there myght none stande
As for worship by hym woulde none ryse.

A fynelde was ordeyned bothe brode and wyde
With lystes fayre where they should runne
Tentes were pyght on every syde
Greate was the people that thether come
The daye was fayre, hote shone the sonne [crye
Greate trumpets blewe, the heraldes made theyr
That every knyght hys deuoure shoulde done
For to proue who was mooste myghtye.

Knightes

Knyghtes then dressed them to the fyelde
 In syluer armoure fayre and bright
 Barons doughtye with speare and shylde [lyght
 With helmes and haubreks that all the fyelde dyd
 Steedes in trappoure the was a goodlye syght
 Speare heade that a strong cote woulde saylle
 Clothe of golde in harnes curyonflye pyght
 Worne of haburgin many a stonge mayle.

Roberte the deuyll came in as meke as a Lyon
 In his fyste he had a greate speare
 Of sure wodde both toughe and longe
 Hys loke fo grymme many men dyd feare
 Also that houghे staffe that he dyd beare
 Was almost as bygge as some twayne.
 Vnoccupyed saide Robert why stand we here
 For to leaue all worke he woulde full fayne.

The Duke bade them all to begynne
 A fayre knyght then feutred hys speare
 In fayth fayde Robert I wyll run to hym
 And lyghtly turned hys greate stede theare
 Eche agayne other speares did beare
 Those coursers dyd runne, they smote in the fyelde
 Hartye were bothe, nought did they feare
 That knyght smote Robert sore in the shyelde.

That

Roberte the Deurll.

15

That the stroke made Robert right wrothe
To him he thought to ryde agayne
He feutred hys speare, and forthe he gothe
With hys shyelde Robert mette playne
And stroke so foore that he smote it euen in twayne
And throughe the knyghtes shulder the speare dyd
I trowe therof Robert was fayne [runne
And asked yf any more woulde come.

Another knyght thought Robert to assayle
So yode they together with greate raundone
Loth were they bothe for to fayle
And hastelye theyr stedes strongelye dyd runne
So swyfte with strenght Robert dyd come
That hys speare ran thorowe the knyghtes bodye
And to the earthe dead fell he downe
All men wondred of Robert trewlye.

The thyrde knyght to the grounde be smote
And brake hys horse backe a sonder
There was none that myght stande a stroke
Of hym that daye, nowe the people dyd wonder
To se that all knyghtes to hym were vnder
For so foore Robert dyd them assayle (thonder
A man had ben as good to haue be smyten with
As to haue a stroke of hys hand without faylle.

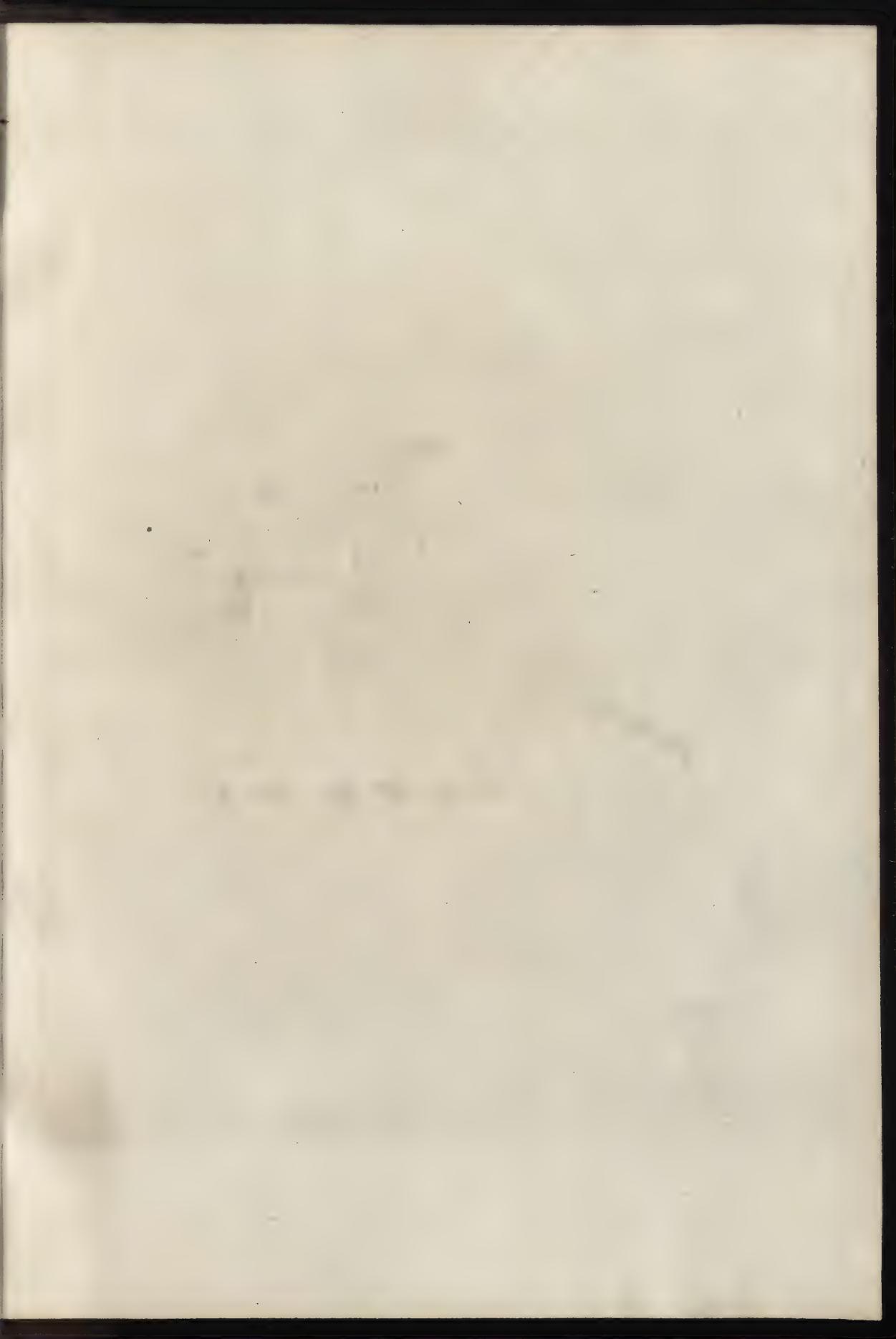
Thre

Thre noble Barons he slew there that daye
 He fared as he had ben a fyende of hell
 As was in earneſte, and not in playe
 Fro theyr horses many knyghtes he fell
 And breke theyr armes as the bokes do tell
 For he trewe ſo grefelye and foore
 That they knewe nother wo nor well
 On ſtedes myght they ryde never more.

All that he mette, he them down threwe
 Yonge nor olde he spared none
 For pitty had he no more than a Jue
 That daye he hurte there many a one
 And lyke a boore at the mouth he dyd fome
 He fought and stroke all while that he was able
 In peace he woulde not haue them to ſtande alone
 He loued murdererſ that were euer vengeable.

To kyll and flea was all hys delight
 Tenne noble ſtedes backes he dyd bruſt
 When that he at theyr masters dyd ſmyte
 Or with hys ſpeare at them dyd thruft
 To fight euer more and more he had luſt
 For all hys pleasure was in deathe fett
 And euer he cryed who wyll more iuſte
 The deuyll was in hym no man myght hym lette.

And





Roberte the Deuyll.

17

And whan hys father sawe howe in vengeance
He was sett, and woulde no sad wayes take
In hys thought he toke greate greuance
And bade that all the knyghtes shoulde departe
Eche theyr waye, and no more justes to make
Than Robert woulde not obey the commaundement
Of hys father, but sayd sorowe shoulde awake
For then in myscheif he sett all hys ententte.

He woulde not go fro the battaylle
But hue and flewe on euery syde
The stronge knyghtes there he dyd assaylle
All the people fledde, they durst not abyde
The knyghtes all awaye dyde tyde
With lordes and Ladyes euerychone
Robert loughe whan he that spyed
Than thought he I will no more go home.

Than Robert rode into the countrey
And robbed and kylled many a one
Maydens and wyues he rauyshed pytteouslye
He pulled downe abbeys and houses of stone
For all the Churches that he dyd by come
Thorowe that countrey of Normandye
By hys wyll there shoulde stande none
For all hys pleasure was in murder and robberye.

C

He

He brente houses and slewe yonge chyldren
 Death vpon death was all hys lyfe
 The countrey complayned to hys father
 Howe theyr seruantes were slayne with Robertes
 Some sayde he hathe rauyshed my wyfe [knyfe
 And by oure daughters he hathe layne
 They prayed the Duke to stynte that stryfe
 Or to flee that lande they would full fayne.

The Duke wepte and sayde alas
 That euer I hym begate on woman
 My prayer vnto Jesu euer was
 For to fende me a chylde for I had none
 And nowe gode hath sente me one
 That maketh me full heauy and sad
 The Dukes wayled and made great mone
 That from her mynde she was nye madde.

The Duke made hys seruantes to ryde
 To seke Robert in Cyttie and in towne
 Good watche was layde on euery syde
 On holte and heath in fyelde and towne
 And in euery place that they dyd come
 The countrey Robert dyd curse and blame
 And prayed that he myght haue an yll death soone
 For he the ordre of knyghthode dothe shame.

With

Roberte the Deupyll.

19

With Robert at the last these men mette
They sayde that he shoulde with them them goo
All aboute Robert shortlye they sette
One asked hym what he woulde doo
Wylt thou go with vs, he sayde noo
And drewe hys sworde and with them dyd fyght
Full greate woundes he gaue one or twoo
And all the refydue he put to flyght.

And all that he toke he put theyr eyes oute
So bade them go seeke theyr way home
And serued them all so withoute doute
These poore men they made greate mone
So Robert departed and lefte them alone
And sayde tell my father that yt ys for hys sake
Then these men in tyme to the courte came home
And shewed what mastryes Robert dyd make,

Thys good Duke in hearte was right wo
When he sawe hys mennes eyes oute
Fore angre he wyft not what to do
But commaunded all the courte aboute
Countables and bayllifes with all theyr route
All men to take hym who so maye
And in pryon to put hym without doute
He charged all men good watche to laye.

C 2

So

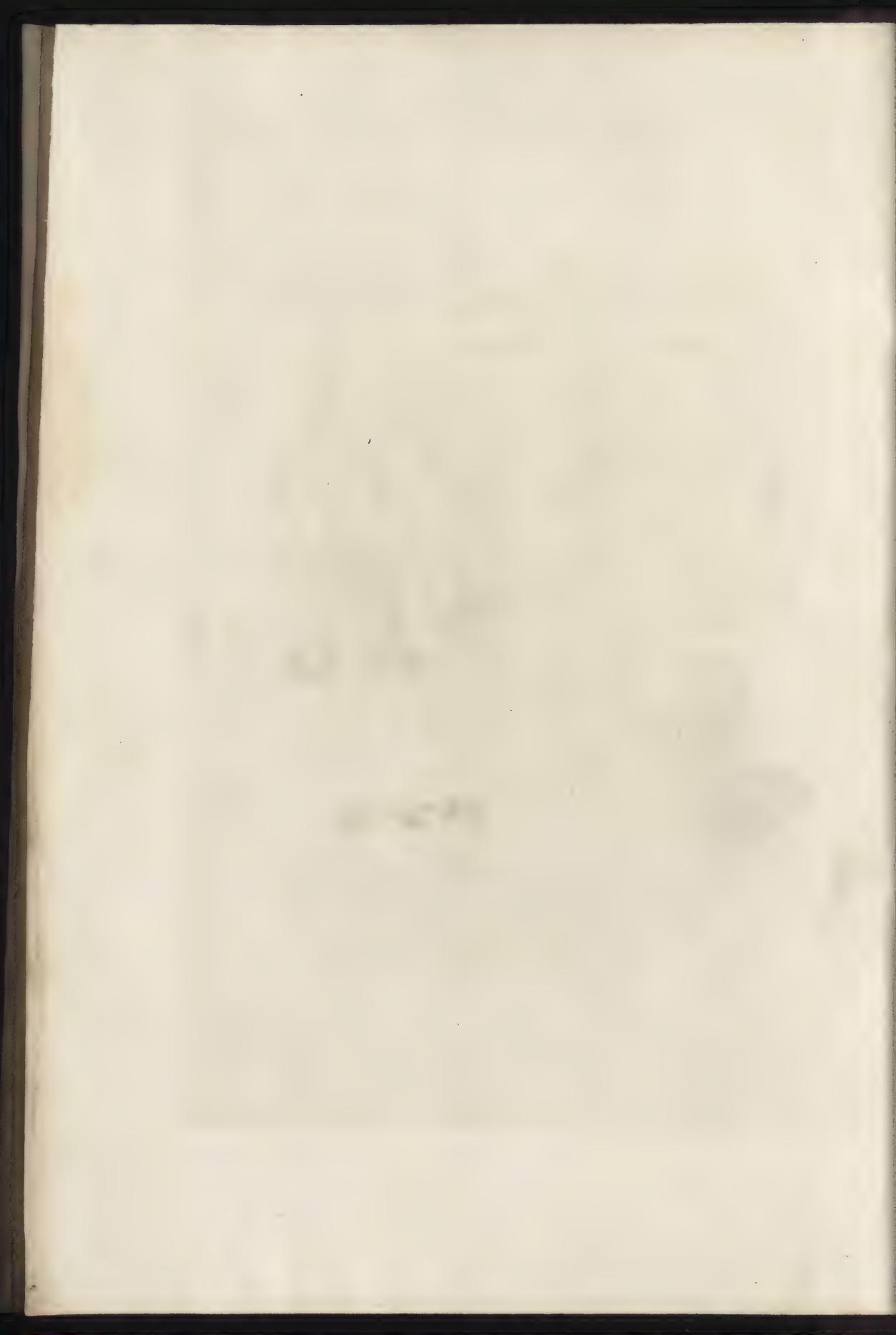
So when Robert knewe of thys warke
 He gathered a great compayne theues yll
 He gate hym into a forrest full darke
 Where yt was farre from borouge or hyll
 There he lyued and all dyd he kyll
 That he myght se in the heath so playne
 Corne and fruites all dyd he spyll
 In doyng myscheif allwaye was he fayne.

Yt was hys pleasure to eate fleshe on the frydaye
 A dogge dyd faste as well as he
 Poore pylgrymes he kyld goyng by the waye
 And holy hermytes that lyued deuoutlye
 So on a daye he rose vppe earlye
 And in the forrest seuen hermytes he founde
 Before a crosse knelynge on theyr knee
 Of theyr prayers to heauen wente the sownde.

What holy whorfones he sayde be youe
 That gapeth vpwardes after the moone
 If ye be a thrust ye shall drynke nowe
 And oute he drewe hys swerde full soone
 The hermytes wylt no what to done
 But suffered death for JESUS sake [runne
 So through one of theyr bôdyes hys sworde dyd
 For feare all the other dyd tremble and quake.

Than





Roberte the Deuyll.

21

Than he strake of theyr heades all
And reioyset at that peryllouse dede
In scorne he sayde, syrs do youe fall
Patter and praye ye in youre crede
Full faste these holy men dyd blede
That Robertes clothes were readde as vermulon
With hys sworde he thought further to sped
In vengeance he rought not where he become.

Lo thys caytiffe was blynde and myght not see
The cloudes had in clypped the Sunne of grace
Lyke to an apple that the core dost putryfie
The darke mystes of uice smote hym in the face
He was none of the shepe of Israel but the kyd of
He exyled pitty as dyd cruel Kynge Pharao [golyas
Heaped full of synne, as euer he was
That flewe hys own mother, men called hym Nero.

Then he leste these seuen hermytes deadde
And rode oute of the wodde lyke a wylde dragon
So lyke a bore he threwe vp hys headde
The bloude of the hermytes couered all hys gowne
A shepherde he sawe and rode to hym soone
But whan the herdes man dyd hym espye
Yt was no hede to bydde hym begone
He ranne hys waye then for feare dyd he crye.

At

At the laste he the shepherde ouertoke in faye
 And asked what tydylges that he woulde tell
 The shepherd agayne to hym dyd faye. [hell
 I was of youe afryde I wende ye had come oute of
 And as for tydylges, here ys darkenes castell
 There lyeth the Dukes of Normandye
 With many a lorde of her counsell
 Of all thys greate lande the roialtye.

So Robert came to the towne there the castell
 The people sawe one ryde as he had ben madde [stode
 With a sworde in hande, and all arayed in bloude
 To runne in to house every man was gladde
 At the last Robert began to waxe sadde
 And sayde alas that euer he was borne
 In murder and myschief my lyfe haue I ladde
 Hys heire of hys heade he thought to haue borne.

Than he was a bashed foore in hys mode
 Whan that the people woulde hym not abyde
 What yt mente than he vnderstode
 Euer body them selfe from hym dyd hyde
 Than to the Castle gate Robert dyd ryde
 Ayd fayne with some body he woulde speake
 But whan any man hym espyede
 They ranne awaye as they dyd in the streate.

Than

Than with a heauy hearte downe dyd he lyght
And went streyght into the Castell hall
But when the people of hym had a sight
None durst hym byde there at all
Many for helpe dyd crye and calle
Hys mother sawe hym as she late at meate
For feare she beganne to fall
And hasted her awaye for to gette.

And when he sawe hys mother goynge
He sayde alas Lady mother speake with me
Hys hearte for forowe brast in weepynge
Whan he sawe her from hym so flee
And sayde to hys mother full pitteouflye
Lady tell me howe that I was borne
That I haue ledde my lyfe so mischeouflye
In the tempests of uice with many a greate storne.

Hys mother all unto hym tolde
Howe she gave hym to the fende both soule and bodye
And he asked her howe she durste be so bolde
To gyue hym from god almightye
I knowe he sayd that I haue lyued synfullye
As euer dyd the emperoure greate Nero
Amende I wyll and for mercye crye
My dedes will I bewaylle whersoeuer I go.

Hys

Hys mother prayed hym to smyte of her headd
 For the trespace she sayde, that I dyd to thee
 I am worthye therefore for to be deadde
 To god I offended also in obstynacye
 Sleame she sayde, and I forgiue yt thee,
 He sayde, Mother I wyll not do so
 I had leuer be beaten full bytterlye
 And on my feate to the worldes ende to go.

Than for woo Robert fell to the grounde
 And a greate whyle there he so laye
 There sodenlye he rose in that stounde
 And saide Mother nowe I go my waye
 To Rome wyll I hye as fast as I maye
 And prayed her to commende hym to hys father dere
 So he desyred them all for hym to praye
 And went forth with a full pytious chere.

So shortly Robert toke hys horse and rode
 Streight vnto the forrest to hys compayne
 Than the Dukes that in the Castle abode
 Shryked full sore with a full pytious crye
 And saide alas lorde to synfull am I
 All women beware, curse neuer your chylde
 And yf that ye do, then be youe in jeopardye
 Also in myscheyff they shalbe defyelde.

Wyth



Robert the Deuyll. 25

Wyth that the Duke came into the chaumber
And asked her why she dyd wepe and wayle
She sayde Robert youre sonne hath ben here [fayle
And shewed how that he wolde to Rome without
Ah, sayde the Duke, I feare yt wyll lyttell auayle
He is not able to make restytucion
Alacke sayd the Duke yet am I gladde sauns sayle
That he ys wyllyng to make hys confession.

Nowe ys Robert come to the forrest agayne
And founde hys men all at dyner syttinge
To conuerte them to goodnes he wold full fayne
And sayde my felowes, with pytious lamentynge
Let vs remember oure synfull lyuyng
And aske god mercy with greate repentaunce
Yf we leade thys lyfe styl, yt will vs bryng
To hell withoute ende, with horrible vengeance.

Let vs remember he saide our synfull lyfe
We haue murdered people full cruellye
Rauyshed maydens and many a wyfe
Slayne prystes and hermytes full pytiouslye
And abbeys haue ben dysstroyed through our robbery
With Nunnes, Ankers, take yt in remembraunce
Howe we put them in iopardie
Wherfore I drede hell, with horrible vengeance.

Houfes we haue brentte many a one
 And spylte of chyldren much precyous bloude
 Compassion there, nor pyttie had we none
 In myscheyff we delyted, and neuer in good
 And nowe let vs remember hym that dyed on the rode
 That from vs yet hath kept hys sworde by sufferaunce
 For and we nowe in deathes daunce stode
 To hell shoulde we go, with horrible vengeaunce.

One sayde Robert, what be youe there
 And stode up and began hym to skorne
 Will youe see fellowes : the fox wylbe an anker
 What master, ye be as wyse as a shepe newe shorne
 I trowe youre buttocke be prycked with a thorne
 For your wytt ys oute of temperaunce
 I wolde not haue thys tearme aboue borne
 That we shoulde to hell go with horrible venge-
 launce.

Another thefe saide master Roberte, harke
 To preache to vs yt ys all in vayne
 And what I saye, I praye you yt marke
 Thys lyfe wyll we leade in wordes playne
 Euer yet in these workes we haue be fayne
 For our synne we entend not to do pennauce
 We wyll not forsake though ye stryue vs agayne
 To hell woulde we rather go with horrible vengeaunce.

Than

Roberte the Deupyll.

27

Than Roberte sawe that they woulde not amende
But in myscheyf there to lyue styll
And to the poore men they wyll ofte offend
Thus then he conspyred in hys wyll
One after another for to kyll
To make short he kylled them euerychone
He sayde ye haue be readye euer to do euyll
Therfore alyue wyll I not leaue one.

He tolde them a good seruaunte must haue good
Nowe do I paye youe after your deseruyng [wages]
There dead in the floore all theyr bodyes sprayles
Robert shutt the doore and they laye within
And sayde of myscheyf this ys the endyng
So he thought to sett the house on fyre
But he dyd not, he yede a waye sighyng
And sayd alas I haue payde my men theyr hyre.

Than Robert toke hys horse and blessed hym
So throughe the forrest he toke the waye
Ouer hylles and downes fast rydynge
Thus rode he styll all a longe daye
And ofte for synne he cryed well awaye
Than of an abbaye he had a fight
Whiche ofte he had robbed in good faye
Alas saide Robert there will I lode to nyght.

D 2

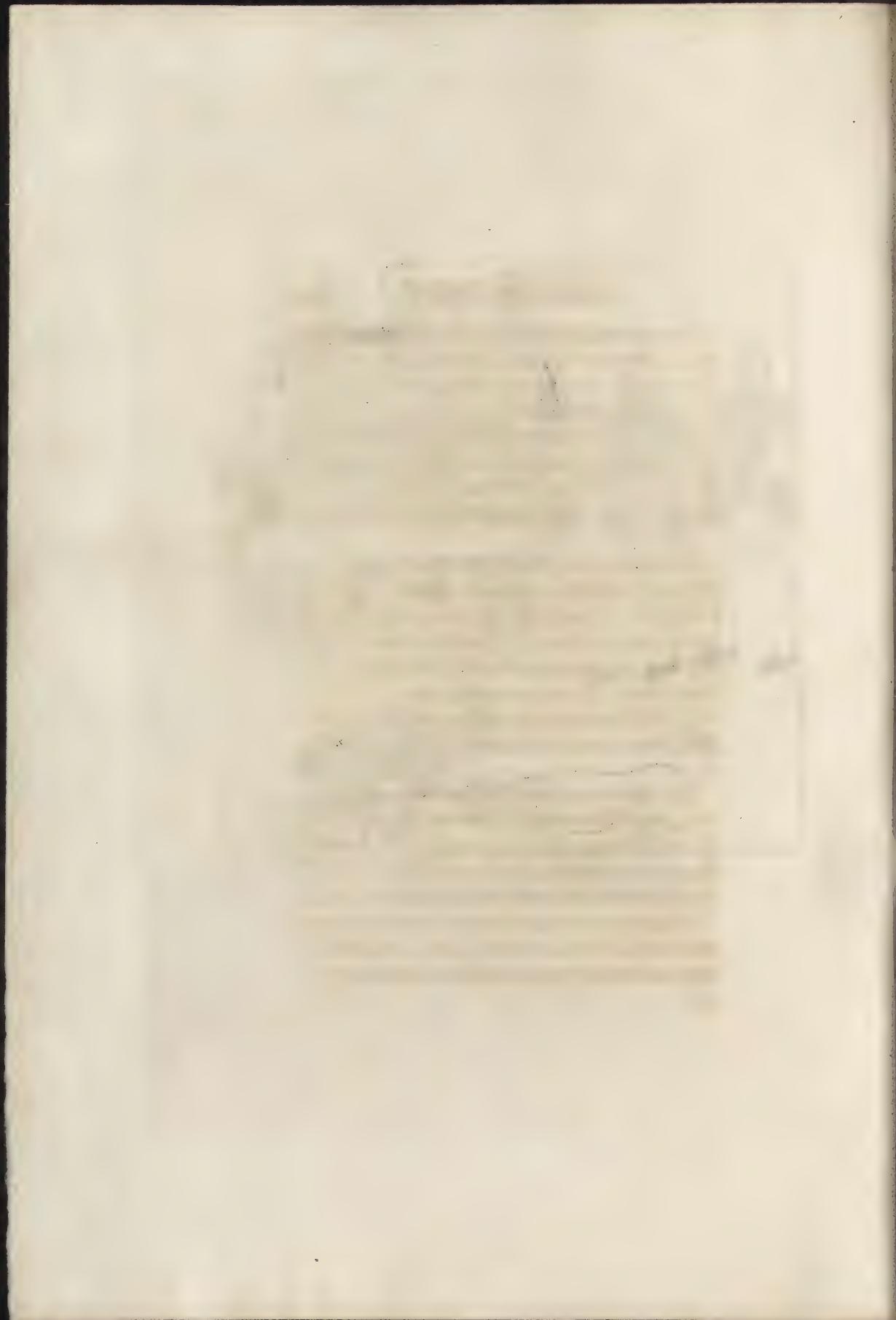
For

For faulce of meatē then he hongred sore
 And sayde to eatē fayne I wolde haue some
 Alacke nowe that euer I was bore
 And when the monkes dyd se hym come
 Eche man hys waye fast dyd ronne
 And saide here cometh the furyous serpent
 Roberte, which ys I trowe a deuylls sonne
 That in murmer and myscheif hath a greate talent.

Than forthe he rode to the churche dore
 And discended from his horse right there
 So he knēled downe in the floore
 And to our lorde god he made hys prayer
 Sayinge, swete Jesu that bought me dere
 Haue mercy on me for that preeuous bloude.
 That ran from your hearte with longis speare
 Which stonge youe in the side hangyng on the roode.

Then vp he rose and went to the Abbot
 And sayde to hym with pitteouse lamentynge
 I haue bene so symple father, that ye well wot
 That nowe I feare the fwordē that ys lyghtly comynge
 Of our lordes vengdaunce for my false lyuynge
 And of all that I haue offended vnto youe
 Forgeue me for hys loue that was hangyng [bowe].
 Seuen hours on the crosse and there hys head dyd
 And





Roberte the Deuyll.

29

And when they hearde hym pitteouflye complayne
And in hys harde hearte toke repentaunce
The monkes all thereof were fayne
So there he tolde them all in substaunce
Howe he was in wyllynge to suffer penaunce
And to Rome to take hys Journeye
So there he called to hys remembraunce
Of hys lodge and therof toke the abbot the keye.

Thys keye to the Abbot there he toke
And tolde hym that he shoulde haue all the treasure
In the theuves lodge yf that he woulde loke
That he had robbed sync the fyrst houre
And saide my meynye lyen dead in the floore
The Abbot he prayed to geue hys father the keye
For I wyll not slepe one night where I do another
Tyll I in Rome with the pope speke maye.

And praye my father to make restytucion
For me to all them that I dyd offend
I crye hym mercy also I am hys sonne
Hym for to myscheif also I dyd entend
But what thoughte, nowe I trust to amende
There Robert toke hys leaue of all the hole couent
Hys horse and hys sworde he to hys father sende
And so departed and on hys feete forthe wente.

Than

Than rode the Abbot to the Duke of Normandye
 And shewed of Robert all that was befall
 There he delyuered vp the keye
 And of hys entente he shewid the Duke all
 Then he hys men before hym dyd call
 And sayde I wyll ryde and restore the goodes agayne
 And euery man hys owne haue shall
 Then were the Dukes seruautes all fayne.

Nowe Robert walked ouer dale and hyll
 By holte and heath, many a very waye
 He laboured night and daye euer styll
 At the last he came to Rome on Sherethursdaye
 All nyght poorely in the streate he laye
 And on the good frydaye to churche he went tywis
 Towardes the quyere and nothynge dyd faye
 For that daye the Pope sayed all the seruyce:

The Pôpes seruautes bade hym go backe
 They smote Robert and thrust hym asyde
 Tho to hym self he sayde, oute alacke
 Yet he thought boldlyer for to abyde
 Where people were thynnest there he espyed
 So prest amonge them tyll he came to the pope
 And fell downe to hys fete and loude there he cryed
 As rayne the teares fell fro hys eyes god wotte.

The

Roberte the Deuyll.

33

The popes seruauntes would haue pulled hym asyde
Oure holy father, yet aunswered naye
Medle not with hym, lett hym abdyde
That I maye here what he dothe faye ;
Robert aunswered I am here thys daye
The synfullest lyuer that euer was founde
Sync. Adam was made in Canaan of claye
I am the greatest synner that lyued on grounde.

The pope sayde what art thou good frende
And whye makest thou thys lamentacon
Oh good father saide Robert to god I haue offended
I desyre youe to heare my confession
Of my greate synnes the abhomynacon
On them to muse. yt ys vnnumerable
Vice and I rested all waye in one habytacion
With murder and euery vnthryfste culpable.

Art thou Robert the deuyll sayde the pope than
That ys the worst creature of all the worlde yll
Yee yee syr sayde Robert I am the same man
Greate myschef haue I do, and muche yll
As to robbe and fle, both burne and kyll
The pope sayd, hege in goddes name I thee warne
By uertue of hys passion stande here styll
Do to me nor my men no maner of harme.

Naye

Naye naye sayde Robert, neuer chrysten man
 Wyll I hurte by night nor daye
 The pope toke hym by the hande than
 And bade hym hys confession to hym saye
 Thereto Robert woulde not saye naye
 But all hys synnes confessed and tolde
 The pope whan he hym hearde dyd quakē for fraye
 For to heare hys synnes hys hearte waxed nyce colde.

And tolde howe hys mother gaue hym to the feonde
 In the houre of hys fyrt contemplacyon [of hell
 The pope sayd Robert I thee tell
 Thou must go to an hermyte three miles withoute the
 Robert sayde with good will thys shalbe done [towne
 Then wente he to the popes goostlye father
 The pope commaunded hym so to done
 That the hermyte might hys confession heare.

In the mornynge Robert walked ouer hyll and dale
 He was full werye of his labouryng
 At the laste he came in to a greate vale
 And founde same hermyte standinge
 Hespeake with the hermyte, and shewed of hys lytynge
 And tolde that he was sente fro the pope of Rōme
 But when that holy man hearde hys confession
 He sayed brother ye be right welcom.

And



And for youre synnes euer youe muste be sorye
 For as yet I will not assaylle youe
 In a lyttell chappell all nyght shall youe lye
 Do ye as I do youe councell nowe
 Aske god mercye; and let youre hearte bowe
 For all thys nyght I wyll wake and praye
 Vnto oure lorde, that I maye knowe.
 Yf in saluacion ye do stande in the waye.

So they departed, the hermyte fell on slepe
 An aungell sodenlye to hym dyd appear
 And saide to Goddes commaundement take good kepe
 And of Robertes penaunce thou shalt heare,
 He muste counterfeyt a foole in all manere
 The meate that he shall eate, he muste pull yt from
 And neuer to speake, but as he dombe weare [a dogge
 Thys penaunce done, he shalbe forgeuen of god.

The hermyte with that shortlye dyd awake
 And called Robert, and spaeke to hym [take
 And saide heare nowe the penaunce that ye shall
 God commaundeth the to counterfet a foole in all
 thinge
 Meate none to eate, withoute a dogge do yt bryngē
 To the in hys mouth, then muste thou yt eate
 No worde to speake, but as bdombe euer beyngē
 With dogges every nyght also thou must sleepe.

The hermyte said, tyll thy synnes be forȝeuē.
 Thou must do as I haue herē sayde
 With thys sharpe penaunce thou must lyue
 Tyll god of hys debtes by the be payde
 Forget not thys, in thy hearte let it be layde
 At the last god wylle sende the wōrde agayne
 Robert wepte as though he shoulde haue dyed
 And sayde thys penaunce will I do full saynd.

The hermyte bāde hym rememb̄ althiynge
 And whan thy synnes be cleane forȝeuēn the
 By an Aungell god wylle sende the warnynge
 Nowe mayst thou no longer byde with me
 Robert blessed the hermyte then trewlye
 So eche toke theyr leaue of other
 Nowe god for euer be wyth the
 He sayd to Robert, nowe farewell brother.

There poore Robert departed fro the hermyte
 And blessed hym and agayne went to Rōme
 For to do hys penaunce in the strete
 And whan that he therer was come
 Lyke as he had ben a foole he dyd ronne
 And lepte and daunced from one syde to another
 Many folke laughed at hym soone
 And wende he had ben a foole, they knew none other.

Boyes.





Roberte the Deuyll.

31

Boyes folowed hym throughe the strete
Castyng stycches and stones at hym
And some with roddes hys bodye dyd beate
The chyldren made greate shoutes and cryenge
Burges of the cyttie at Robert laye laughynge
Oute of theyr wyndowes to se hym playe
The boyes threwe dyrte and myre at hym
Thus contynewd Robert manye a daye.

Thus he played the foole on a season
He came on a tyme to the Emperours Courte
And sawe that the gate stode all open
Robert ranne into the hall and beganne to work
So daunced and lept and aboute so starte
At the late the Emperoure had pyttie on hym
Hewe he taere hys clothes and gnew hys sherte
And bade a seruaunte meate hym for to bryng:

Thys seruaunte brought Robert plentyc of meate
So proferde hyt hym and saide go dyne
Robert late styl he woulde not eate
Yet god wotte hys belly greate pyne
At last the Emperoure sayde yonder ys a hounde of myne
And bade hys seruaunte throwe hym a bone
So he dyd, and whan Robert yt had spyne
Alack thought Robert, he shall not eate yt alone.

E 2 bring out thy bone or He

He lept from the table and with the dogge caught
 And all for to haue the bone awaie
 The hounde at the last by the fyngers hym caught
 So styll in hys mowthe he kepte hys praye,
 Whan Robert sawe that, downe he laye
 The dogge gnewe the one ende and Robert the other
 The Emperoure laughed whan he that sawe
 And sayde the dogge and he fought harde together.

The Emperoure sawe that he was hongrye
 And bade to throwe the dogge a hole loffe
 Whan Robert sawe that he was glad greateleye
 For to lose hys parte he was right lothe,
 And agayne to the dogge he goeth
 So brake the loffe a sonder and to the hounde
 He gaue the one halfe to saye the sothe
 And eatte the other as the dogge dyd on the grounde.

The Emperoure saide, syth that I was borne
 Sawe I never a more foole naturall
 Nor suche an ydeot sawe I never beforne
 That had leuer eatte that that to the dogge dyd fall
 Rather then that that was proffered hym in the hall
 Than Robert toke hys staffe and smote at forme and
 stile
 What sorowe was in hys hearte they knewe not all
 There men were gladd to see hym playe the foole.

At

At the last Robert went into a garden
And there he founde a fayre fountayne
He was a thurst and whan he had dronken
He wente in to hys dogge agayne
To folowe hym euer he was fayne
Thus vnder a stayre at nyght laye the hounde
And euer hys pennance Robert dyd not dysdayne
Allwaye hys bed was with the dogge on the grounde.

Whan the Emperoure espyed hym lye there
Fett hym a bed to a man dyd he saye
And lett yt be layed for hym under the stayre
So they dyd and Robert poynted as naye
And woulde have them to beare the bed awaie
Then they fett hym an arme full of strawe
And therupon by hys dogge he laye
All men marueyled that yt sawe.

Muche myrth and sporte he made euer amonge
And as the Emperoure was at dyner on a daye
A Jue sate at the borde, that greate rowme longe
In that house beare, and was receyued all waye
Than Roberte hys dogge toke in hys armes in faye
And touched the Jue and he ouer hys sholder loked
backe
Robert set the dogges ars to hys mowth without naye
Full soore the Emperoure loughe whan he sawe that.

Robert

Robert sawe a bryde that shoulde be maryed
 And soone he toke her by the hande
 So into a foule donege myxen he her caryed
 And in the myre he let her stande
 The Emperoure stode and behelde hym longe
 At the last Robert toke a quycke Catte
 And ranne into the kechyn amonge the thronge
 And threwe her quycke into the beefe potte.

Lordes and barons loughe that they coulde not
 To see hym make myrth withoute harme [stande
 They saide he was the meryest in all that lande
 With that a messenger the Emperoure dyd warne
 That aboue rome was many a Sarasyne
 And saide the Seneschall hathe gathered a great armye
 Because ye wyll not let your daughter haue hym
 He purposeth all Rome for to dystroye.

Thys Emperoure had a daughter that coulde not
 The whiche the Seneschall loued as hys lyfe [speake
 And ofte with the Emperoure he dyd treate
 For to haue her vnto hys wyfe
 And for that cause the Seneschall made thys stryfe
 Because the Emperoure in nowise woulde
 Geue hym hys daughter, he swere ofte sythe
 Maugre hys head wyne her he shoulde.

The



Roberte the Deuyll.

39

The Emperoure heard of the Sarafyns that were
For to dystroye theyr chrystyan Countrey [come
He made a crye in greate Rome
That younge and olde shoulde make readye
As manye as were betwene systene and syxtye
Lordes barons and knyghtes drewe out of euery cost
With an houge compayne and a myghtye
They thought for to Fell the Sarafyns greate hoste.

So forth withall bothe these hostes mette
Wyth weapons bright and stedes stronge
So with foore strokes together they sette
Theyr speares braste in peces longe
Many a doughtye was slayne in that thronge
Greate horses stamped in yron wedes
Oure chrysten men were put to the wronge
With woundes depen that full sore bledes.

Oure lorde on hys seruauntes had compassion
And sent an Aungell with horse and armure
Vnto Robert as he dranke in the garden
There the Aungell bade hym arme hym sure [dure
And saide bestryde thys good stede that longe will en-
And in all haste go ryde and helpe the Emperoure
Alacke thought Robert nedē hath no cure
Than rode he forth the space of an houre.

He

40. The Life of

He rode into the thyckest of the fyelde
And hue and slewe of the Sarasyns a greate numbre
No steele nor harburgyn that with hym helde
Hys dentes rouges as yt had ben thonder
He smote mennes bodyes cleane a fonder
Hys sworde made many a head to bled
That the Emperoure had greate wonder
What knyght yt was that he sawe so doughtye in
[dede.

With the helpe of god and Robert that knyght
That daye the Sarasyns loste the fyelde
And whan that ended was that fyght
Euery man houered and behelde
Where that whyte knyght was that wepon dyd welde
But Robert wente into the garden
And layde downe bothe harnes and shylde
Yt vanyshed a waye, he wyft not where yt became.

And all thys sawe the Emperours doughter
That the Aungell brought Robert the whyte stede
And howe at the welles syde he dyd of all hys armure
Therof she had greate maruayle in dede
At the last the Emperours men dyd of theyr wede
And came to dynar into theyr lordes hall
The Emperoure said this daye Jesu dyd vs spede
And the white knyght fayre must hym befall.

Than

Robert the Deuyll. 41

Than Robert came in lyke a foole playinge
Into the hall, and leapt from place to place
The Emperoure was glad to se Robert daunsyng
Than he spyd a great race of bloude in Robertes face
But that he gate when he in the battayle was
The Emperoure wende that hys seruauntes had hurt
And saide, there ys some rybaude in this place [hym so
That hath hurte my Robert, that no harm can do.

The Emperoure asked whether that whyte knyght
Hys lordes aunswered, we can not saye [was gone
At the last hys daughter that was bothe deafe and
Euer she poyncted to Robert allwaye [dombe
Her father wondred at her in good faye
And asked her mystres, what hys daughter ment
She said, she meaneth that Robert thys daye [dente.
Holpe youe to wynne the fytelde with hys doughty.

Her mystres said that Robertes greate bloudye race
Youre daughter meaneth he had it in the fytelde
At her wordes the Emperoure afshamed was
And waxed angrye and that hys daughter behelde
He saide thys folysh mayde thynketh he fought in the
He bade her mestres teache her more better [fytelde
Far and she will not wyser be in her elde
A foole shall she dye, there maye no man let her.

F. Than.

Than the seconde tyme the Sarasins came to Rome
 And with the Emperoure fought asore fytelde
 The Aungell agayne to Robert dyd come
 And then he rode forth hys weapon to welde
 He perished brestplates and many ashylde
 He strooke of bothe legge and arme
 The Emperoure that knyght agayne behelde
 To watche for hym hys men he dyd warne.

But he was gone they wist not whether
 So on the morowe an other fytelde was pyght
 The Emperoure charged euery man to do his endeuer
 For to haue knownen that whyte knyght
 So on the morowe that they shoulde fyght
 Syxe knyghtes laye in a woode preuelye and stylle
 They sayde we wyll of that noble man haue a fylle
 And to our lorde bryng hym we wyll.

On the morowe the sunne shone bright
 Bothe partyes there was assembled
 All the fytelde gaue a greate lyght
 Of the gleyues that glystred, the stedes trembled
 A wonder to heare the brydles that gyngled
 With arbelaters they shot many a quarell
 All the gronde of the noyse rombled well
 Through the helpe of Robert the Chrysten men sped
 That

Roberte the Deuyll;

43

That daye Roberte proued hym doughtye of hande
Manye fro theyr horses downe he dyd shlynge
None was able hys dente for to with stande
There men myght heare greate rappes ryngē
The noyse of gunnes made such a bellowyngē
All the fytelde sowned as yt had ben thonder
Of bloude greate gutters they myght se runnyngē
And many a knyghtes head cleste a sonder.

All Sarasyns fled, the chrysten won the fytelde
Robert rode awaie than full pryuelye
The knyghtes in the wodde hym behelde
And lowde vnto hym beganne to crye
Syr knyght speake with vs for thy courtesye
Robert thought not agayne to turne
The other knyghtes rode after hastelye [runnes]
And smote theyr horses with spores and after dyd

Roberte ranne ouer dale and hyll
Hys stede was good that he had there
A bolde knyght folowed after hym styll
And into the rest he threwe hys speare
So strongelye to Roberte he hyt beare
To haue slayne hys horse, and smote hym in the thyne
The speare head brast, and in hys legge bode there
Than was thys gentle knyght full soorye.

F 2

Backe

Backe agayne rode than thys knyght so bolde
 And shewed the Emperoure that he was gone agayne
 There of hys speare heade he hym tolde
 To see hym quod the Emperoure I woulde full fayne
 Than throughe all hys lande he dyd proclayme
 That he that woulde shewe the greate wounde with
 the speare head
 Shoulde haue hys daughter, and not her layne
 Vnto hys wyfe her for to wedde.

When the Seneschall hearde the proclamation
 He made hymself a greate wounde throughe the thye
 So gate a speare and whyte armoure soone
 And so rode to the Emperoure with all hys meynye
 And said Syr Emperoure that valyaunt knyght am I
 That faued youe thre tymes fro grame
 The Emperoure said to hym, thou art not lykelye
 And bade hym holde hys peace for shame

At last the Seneschall shewed hym hys wounde
 And said, beholde thys and the head of the speare
 The Emperoure was abashed in that stounde
 So there he gaue the Seneschall hys daughter
 And on the morowe he shoulde be maryed vnto her
 So was the Emperoure by hym beguyled
 He wende verelye that he had ben there
 And fought in the fielde as a knyght doughted.

On





On the morowe thys greate weddyng shoulde be
That the Seneschall shoulde haue hys daughter
And so brought her to churche, the seruyce began
There by myrakle thys lady spake to her father [ready
And saide thys traytoure he hath beguyled youe here
For Robert was he that helpe you in the fytelde
I sawe an Aungell bryng hym bothe shylde and speare
With these two wordes downe on her knees she kneled.

And the Emperoure whan he sawe hys daughter
For ioye he was nere oute of hys mynde [speakē
And thanked god for that myracle greate
Than the Seneschall with shame shranke behynde
So to the Pope the Emperoure dyd wynde
The mayde tolde the Pope what Robert had done
And brought them to the welle the speare head to fynde
And betwene two stones she espyed yt sone.

[greate

Than went to seke Robert bothe lordes and ladyes
At the lafte they founde hym lye vnder the stayre
Amonge the dogges and with them dydde eatē
They desyred hym to speake with wordes fayre
But he made signes as he coulde not heare
With that came an hermyte & toke hym by the sleue
Sent thether by god he was hys goostlye father
And bade hym speake, sayinge hys synnes were forgatē.

Yet

Yet was he afearde to speake, and durst not
 The Emperoure prayed hym to se hys thye
 Robert woulde not heare, but whan he sawe the Pope
 He ranne and played hys tauntes about lyghtlye
 The pope bade hym speake for the loue of Mariye
 Robert hym scorned and gaue hym hys blesfyng
 He woulde not breake hys pennauice, he had leuer dye
 Then the hermyte bade hym speake, forgeuen is thy
 [synne.

With that Robert fell downe on hys knēe
 And thanked Jesu that forgaue hym hys myflyuyng
 The pope and the Emperoure were glad trewlye
 But most of all that ladye made reioysyng
 That was the Emperours doughter that yongelyng
 Desyryng her father that she myght Robert wedde
 For thy askynge said he, I gyue the my blesfyng
 In all the haste daughter yt shalbe spedde.

Than Robert maryed the Emperours doughter
 A feast was holde of great solempnytie
 Eche of them were full gladde of other
 And at the last when ended was thys ryaltye
 He toke leaue of the Emperoure and to hys owne
 He yede for the imp hys father was dead [countrēy
 Also a false knyght put hys mother in greate ieopardy
 Whych Robert at the laste hyngē by the headde.

With

Robert the Deuyll. 47

With hys mother he mette in the cyttee of Rome
The Duches was then glad and blythe
That Robert her sonne so vertuous was come home
Whiche in hys youthe lyued so myscheuous a lyfe
Than all men loued hym, both mayde and wyfe
Tyll it befell vpon a certayne daye
A messenger came from the Emperoure full swythe
And prayed hym to come to Rome in all the hast he
maye

He tolde that the Seneschall had greate warre
With hys lorde the Emperoure in dede
Robert sent after men nye and farre
In all the haste thether he gan spedē
But ere he came was done a myscheuous dede
The Seneschall the Emperoure had slayne
For sorowe Robertes hearte dyd blede
In fytelde he woulde haue fought full fayne.

The Seneschall hearde that Robert was come
And purposed for to mete hym in the fytelde
He reared up many a black Sarason
With wepon stronge bothe speare and shytelde
So ether partyes other behelde
And fought together a greate batteyll
There Robert with hys handes the Seneschall kyld
So to hys countrey returned without fayle.

And

And whan he came agayne to Normandye
 He dreade euer god and kepte hys lawe
 So lyued he full deuoutelye
 For all thyngē woulde he do vnder awe
 And punyſhe Rebelles both hange and drawe
 Than was he called the feruaunte of god
 No theſe woulde he faue that he myght knowe
 For dreade of goddes righteousnes the sharpe rodde.

One chylde by the Emperours daughter he had
 That was a knyght with Kinge charles of Fraunce
 In manfull dedes he hys lyfe ladde
 Doughty he was bothe with speare and launce
 Lo, thy Robert ended hys lyfe in penaunce
 And whan he dyed hys soule went to heauen hye
 Nowe all men beare theſe in remembraunce
 He that lyueth well here, no euyll death shall dye.

Yonge and olde that delyteth to reade in storye
 Yt shall youe fyrre to uertuous lyuynge
 And cause ſome to haue theyr memorye
 Of the paynes of hell, that ys euer duryngē
 By readyng bookeſ men knowe all thyngē
 That euer was done, and hereafter ſhallbe
 Idlenes to myscheif many a one doth bryngē
 And ſpecyally as we daylye may ſee.

Take

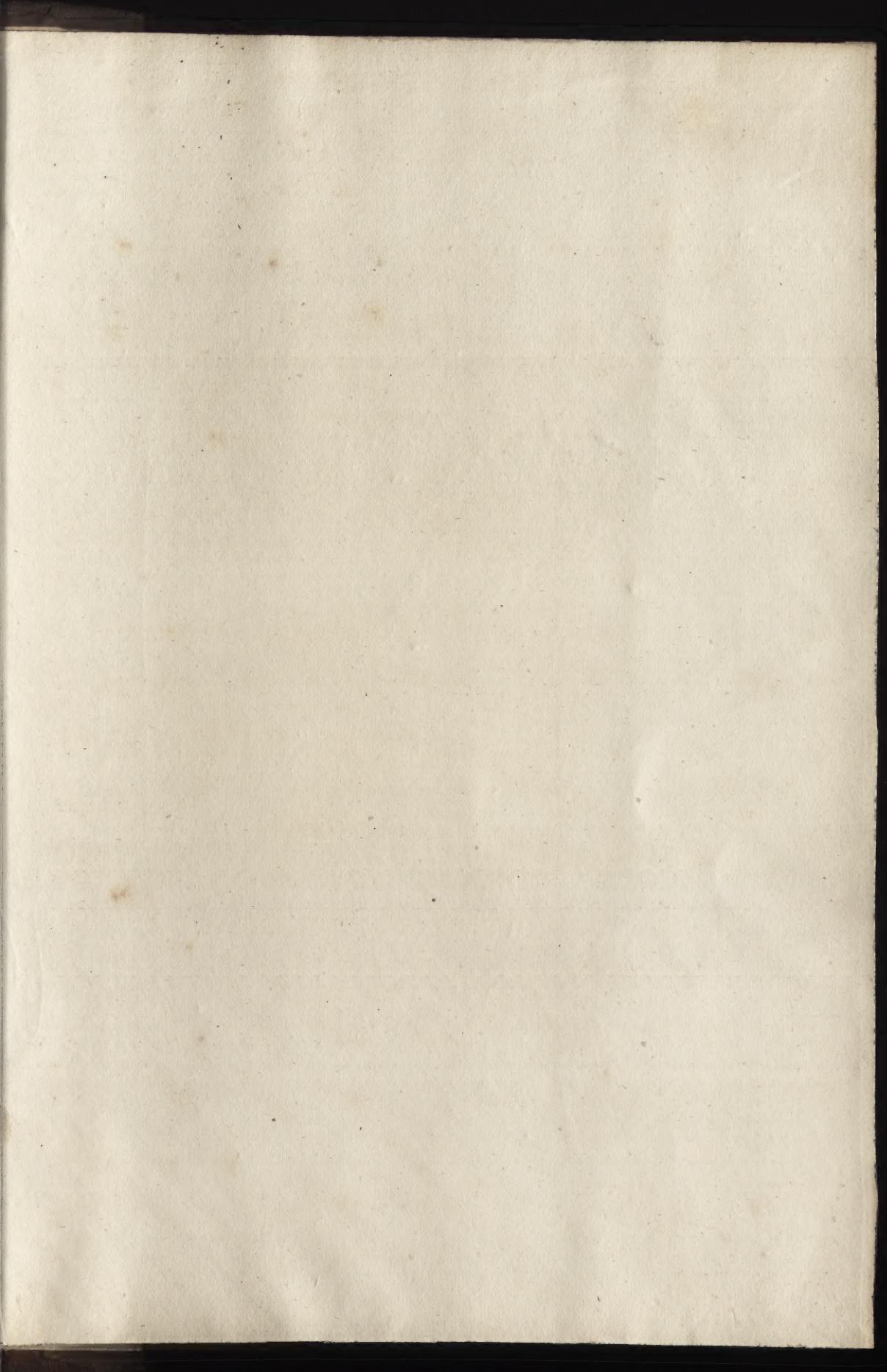
Robert the Deuyl.

49

Take youe ensample of thys story olde
 Howe that he in youth dyd greate vengeaunce
 In doyng myscheife he was euer bolde
 Tyll god sent to hym good remembraunce
 And after that he toke fuche repentaunce
 That he was called the seruaunte of god by name
 And so contynewed without varyaunce
 God geue vs grace that we may do the same.

Here endeth the lyfe of
 Robert the Deuyl.





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